

DEPARTMENT OF

Media Kit



A BALANCED APPROACH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Interviews & Visits	1
Information Regarding Juveniles in Custody	2
General Agency Information	2
Juvenile Justice Board Meetings	3

Introduction

This media kit has been compiled by the Public Information Office of the Department of Juvenile Justice to assist media reporters, photographers, and editors in providing coverage of the department. Sections on the following topics are included:

- Agency policy and procedure for media interviews and visits to juvenile correctional centers (JCCs).
- Agency policy and procedure for the release of information regarding a juvenile.
- Information about the Juvenile Justice Board meetings.
- General information about the Department of Juvenile Justice and its related institutions.

We hope that this document is useful to you as you fulfill your responsibilities to report news of interest and concern to the public. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns, we would welcome your feedback on how we can better serve your needs. Please feel free to call us at (804) 786-0300.

Interviews & Visits

At the Department of Juvenile Justice, we value our positive working relationship with the news media. We want to work with you to help meet your information needs in an expeditious manner, and our goal is to facilitate that process for you.

Reporters interested in doing stories about the agency or interviewing agency employees for information are asked to contact Mr. Bruce Twyman, Public Relations and Development Coordinator

Mr. Twyman will respond to your questions, gather the information requested and relay it to you promptly, or put you in direct contact with the agency employee best suited to respond to your inquiry. He will arrange telephone or in-person interviews and will coordinate your visit to the facility for such interviews.

Reporters are specifically asked to route all requests for interviews, information, and footage (excluding juvenile custody) through the Public Information Office. We are sensitive of your information needs and deadlines, and we will be glad to assist you.

A designated agency representative should escort reporters when visiting Department of Juvenile Justice facilities. We can help you reach your destination and facilitate your interviews with staff members when such arrangements are made in advance.

Information Regarding Juveniles in Custody

From time to time, you may need to contact the agency for information about a juvenile who has been involved in a newsworthy event or activity. The Department of Juvenile Justice must balance the information needs of the news media with the rights of juveniles in our custody to receive confidential treatment.

To that end, we cannot release identifying information involving the custody of any juvenile remanded to our care. We can, however, explain the stages of Virginia's Juvenile Justice System to you.

General Agency Information

The Department of Juvenile Justice is the executive branch agency that provides services to delinquent youth and protects public safety by assisting the courts in holding juveniles accountable for their actions.

Since separating from the Department of Corrections as an independent agency under the Public Safety Secretariat on July 1, 1990, the agency has provided custody and care for committed juveniles; probation and parole supervision; and prevention and diversion services in the community.

With the increased attention placed on youth crime and its seriousness in the Commonwealth, the 1996 General Assembly mandated that the agency name be changed from the Department of Youth and Family Services to the Department of Juvenile Justice.

The Department of Juvenile Justice serves the entire Commonwealth by providing support for community programs and services, community supervision and case management, and custody and care for committed juveniles. The Central Office in Richmond and three regional offices in Roanoke, Fairfax, and Hampton coordinate the functions and funding for the court service units (CSUs), community programs, community and state facilities, volunteers, and private providers.

Headed by a Director, agency functions are divided among three deputy directors. Specifically, the Deputy Director for Administration and Finance manages support functions that include fiscal operations, capital outlay, information services, and research and evaluation. The Deputy Director for Community Programs oversees and coordinates operations that provide direct services to youth and families, which includes community-based programs, probation and parole services, regional offices, court service units, and delinquency prevention and diversion efforts. The Deputy Director for Institutions oversees juvenile correctional center operations including residential treatment and health services for committed youth.

Juvenile Justice Board Meetings

Board meetings are open to the press and public. The Board meets the second Wednesday at 10 a.m. on alternate months (January, March, May, July, September, and November) in the Board Room of the Central Office, located on the 4th floor, 700 Centre Building, 7th & Franklin Streets unless otherwise specified. Meeting notices are published in the *Virginia Register* at: <http://legis.state.va.us/codecomm/register/issfiles.htm>.

The current members of the Board of Juvenile Justice are:

- Kim S. Downing
- Aida L. Pacheco
- Courtney Penn
- Patricia Puritz
- James S. Turpin (Chair)
- Julia Winslett

Speakers' Guidelines: While it is our practice to allow anyone the opportunity to address the Board during Board meetings, the guidelines listed below should be followed to avoid disruption to the meetings.

1. All visitors must sign in at the reception desk upon arrival to the Department of Juvenile Justice or with Mr. Twyman if the meeting is held elsewhere. All persons who wish to speak during the “public comments” period must indicate their desire to do so on the sign-in sheet.
2. Board meetings begin promptly at 10:00 a.m., unless otherwise announced. Anyone wishing to address the Board must be registered to do so prior to the start of the meeting. No one will be added to the list of speakers after the meeting has begun.
3. When addressing the Board, please limit your comments to items on the agenda for that particular meeting.
4. All speakers will be given a maximum of five minutes to address the Board. However, the time allotted each speaker may be modified by the Board Chairman based upon the number of agenda items and speakers registered. In the event you exceed the time limit and are asked to conclude your remarks, please do so immediately.
5. From time-to-time you may have written material to distribute to the Board members. Please give the written material to Mr. Twyman prior to the Board meeting. The Board reviews all written material; therefore, we would ask that you refrain from reading the material to the Board. You should concentrate your efforts on your comments regarding your concerns.
6. To avoid distractions, you are requested to remain in the Board Room, or alternate meeting site, until the Chairman calls for a break or until the end of the meeting. Movement in and out of the room is very distracting to Board members and staff.